Mary A Hoggs

A Funeral Sermon

Preached at the

Merchants Lecture,

AT

Pinner's-Hall, Broadstreet,

UPON THE

DEATH

Of the Reverend

Mr. *Thomas Gouge,*

Who Deceased *Jan.* 8. $16\frac{99}{700}$.

By *JOHN NESBITT.*

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J. 328

TO THE

Relations and Friends

Of the Reverend

Mr. *Thomas Gouge*,

DECEASED.

THE more Useful your Relation or Friend was to the World, and Delightful to you, the more Conspicuous will your Graces appear, in a becoming Submission to the Will of Him, who hath now remov'd him to a Better Place. We can't part with such in whom we have Pleasure, without Pain; nor can such as have been united in Affection, part without a Sigh

and a Groan. *To have no Senſe of what we ſuffer, or to part with our Friends as if we ſuſtained no Loſs, is Stupidity, and not Submiſſion; but while you feelingly complain to* God, *to ſhow your Affection, beware of complaining of him, or cenſuring his Diſpenſations, for he is accountable for* None *of his Ways; as he can't deny us that Mercy which we have Merited, ſo he can't take that from us which we have not Forfeited; therefore it becomes you to ſay with* David, **I was Dumb, I opened not my Mouth, because thou didſt it.**

Pſal. 39. 9.

What I have ſaid of him, will appear to the Impartial, his Circumſtances being conſidered, to be a due Debt. If any of you think

think I have ſaid too little, blame your ſelves, for not making Choice of a more Skilful Hand, to repreſent him in his full Luſtre. If any blame me for ſaying ſo much, that's owing to the Living, who made it needful, and not to my Inclination. If to think and ſpeak Ill of others is (as a Great Man hath Aſſerted) not only a bad thing, but a ſign of a bad Man, ſure I am, it's a very difficult thing to find a good Man in Converſation, when ſpeaking Ill of others is ſo much in faſhion. It is a pity, when ſo many of all Parties ſeem to be bent for Diviſion, that ſuch ſhould appear agreed and united only in this, to think the way to do Chriſt Service, and promote their own

Opi-

Opinions, is by endeavouring to blaſt the Reputation of each other; I wiſh rather all Parties could learn to be Conſcientiouſly ſtrict to their own Principles and Perſwaſions, in Practice, and at the ſame time do all the Offices of Love and Kindneſs to each other, notwithſtanding our Differences, as becomes the Diſciples of a Meek Jeſus.

As for this Diſcourſe, it is a Theme that is ſo often Preach'd and Publiſhed, and Calculated chiefly for Practice, that I muſt not expect, it will ſuite the Guſt and Reliſh of ſuch Airy Chriſtians as deſpiſe all Practical Diſcourſes; but if it may be Bleſt of God, to aſſiſt and excite any of you, or others,

ſo

ſo to number their Days, that they may apply their Hearts to Wiſdom, *my Deſign is obtained; which that it may, is the Earneſt Prayer of,*

Your Sincere Friend and Servant in the Miniſtry of Chriſt Jeſus,

John Nesbitt.

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A Funeral-Sermon.

ECCLES. vii. Verſe 2.

The laſt clauſe.

The Living will lay it to his Heart.

IT is generally granted that Life is the moſt ineſtimable Jewel of the Creation; the Father of Lyes in this ſpake Truth; That *Skin for Skin,* Job 2. 4. *and all a Man hath he will give for his Life.* Life tho' but in an Inſect, is more Glorious than the Sun that gave it both Breath and Being. *A Living Dog is better than* Eccl. 9. 4. *a Dead Lyon.* Yet this Royal Preacher when he weighs the Godly

Man's Death, with the Day of his Natural Birth, he prefers the former before the latter. The one is attended with a numerous train of Miſeries, whereas the other is the Believers deciding Stroak, and final Conqueſt over all his Enemies. Hence he perſwades us to allay the Sorrow and Toyl of a miſerable Life, by making preparation for a comfortable Death; and the method propoſed, is to frequent Funerals rather than Feaſts. *It is better to go to the Houſe of Mourning, than to the Houſe of Feaſting*, and that for two Reaſons.

Firſt, Becauſe while we are Lamenting anothers Death, we may learn the Frailty of our own Life. *For it is the end of all Men.*

Secondly, The Influence it will have upon our Hearts and Practice. *The Living will lay it to his Heart.* Which paſſage I hope will not be thought unſuitable to the late Providence, which gave me the ſad occaſion to make choice of it.

Firſt,

First, Here's a Duty mentioned *Laying Death to Heart.*

Secondly, You have the equity or reaſonableneſs of it. *The Living will lay it to his Heart:* As he Merits the Character of a Fool, nay of a Devil, that can make a mock of his own or anothers Sins, ſo he is juſtly eſteemed Dead, while Living, that with an unconcerned Eye can ſee Death's Conqueſt over others, which is the Fruit of Sin and the example of his own. Prov. 14. 9.

The Doctrine I purpoſe to proſecute from theſe Words is this, *When we hear or ſee Death removing the beſt of Men and Miniſters, it is highly reaſonable to expect that the Living will lay Death to Heart.*

In managing this point I ſhall,

I. Show what it is to lay Death to Heart

II. The reaſonableneſs of it.

III. apply it.

First, What it is to lay Death to Heart.

Mente attendet.

First, To fix the Mind upon Dying, to make it the Subject of our ſerious Meditation: He that is a Wiſe Man will conſider his latter end, when he ſees an end is come to others before him: Some like the Prodigal laviſh out their Thoughts wholly about this World, and Death that will ſhortly ſnatch them from it, is quite forgotten; they like Archimedes are drawing their Projects in the Duſt: Take no Alarum by the warnings that are given them, till the Enemy ſmite them down at once. Others think it too Melancholy a Theme, and why ſhould they torment themſelves before the time, to think that this Body, carefully kept and delicately fed, muſt change its preſent dwelling, to become not only a Companion, but a Banquet for Worms. Some they hope that their Sun is not yet arrived at its Meredian, and for them to think of Dying, is as if you would bid them go to Bed at Noon Day: When they have ſettled thire Affairs in the World; their Years are come,

in

in which they have no Pleaſure; when Old Age hath Snowed upon their Heads and devoured their ſenſual Pleaſures, then to think of Dying is a ſuitable Doctrine: But while their Blood is Sparkling in their Veins, it is not a convenient Seaſon: Nay, even the Believer tho' he is in ſafety as to his Spiritual ſtate, is apt to ſhiver at the firſt view of this King of Terrors, as *Job* calls him, tho' with the Apoſtle he groan under the weight of his tireſom Tabernacle, yet when he ſees the Hand that muſt deliver him, he deſires rather, that the Mortal Body might be cloathed with Immortal Glory; but tho' we fly from Death like *Moſes* from his Rod when turned into a *Serpent*, yet when we frequently take it up by the Hand of Faith, we ſee there is no harm nor danger in it. To lay Death to Heart is to acquaint our Thoughts with Dying.

Secondly, To be duly affected with our concernment in it, he will not paſs it over with a ſlight apprehenſion, *like a Natural Man beholding his Face*

Jam. 1. *Face in a Glaſs, and ſtraightway forgetteth what manner of Man he was.* But he will work it upon his affections. I know there are many who Laugh at Death, and treat their diſſolution with Contempt and Scorn, like *Gaal* of old, who disdain'd *Abimelech*, when at a diſtance, *Who is Abimelech that we ſhould ſerve him?* And yet at the firſt attack cowardly fled before him: Some are like the ſleepy Drunkard at eaſe in their Sins, and never lift up their Eyes till in the midſt of Hell Flames. That profeſſion, which ſerves many to keep up a Reputation in Religion, will prove too ſlender a defence againſt the Arrows of this King of Terrors.

Indituru eſt illud animo ſuo. Trem.

Judges 9. 38.

Mr. Sedgwicks Sermon at the Funeral of Mr. Strong 1656.

There are Three things which one ſaid many Years ago Prognoſticate approaching judgments, becauſe not duly regarded.

Firſt, An unconcernedneſs of Spirit, when the Foundations of the Chriſtian Religion are overturned and deſtroyed, to ſee the Corner-Stone pull'd out, and we not affected.

Secondly,

Secondly, To ſee the generality of Profeſſors contenting themſelves with an empty Name, without the power of Religion, *No Man ſtiring up himſelf to take hold of* a departing *God.* Iſa. 64. 7.

Thirdly, To ſee the Miniſters of Chriſt deſpiſed and contemned. *The Lord had compaſſion on his people and on his dwelling place. But when they mocked the Meſſengers of God*, &c. *Then Wrath aroſe, and there was no remedy.* If the Ambaſſadors of Peace be rejected, the Herald's of War will follow them: And have we not the ſame Symptoms ſtill remaining? There are ſome things that are of great Moment, and very uncertain as to our enjoyment of them, and therefore we ſhould be deeply affected with them; one is the offers of the everlaſting Goſpel. *O that thou hadſt known in this thy Day. &c.* the Waters of Life will not always run waſt by your Doors. If God's to Day be too ſoon, your to Morrow may be too late. Another 2 Chro. 36. 15, 16. Luk. 19. 42

ther is the inward ſtriving of the
Gen. 6. 3. Spirit. *My Spirit ſhall not always ſtrive with Man.* When you are under conviction take heed how they wear off: If they leave thee ſhort of a thro' cloſure with Chriſt, thou art undone for ever; and I may add our own Life, *Is it not a Vapour*
Jam. 4. 14. *that appeareth for a little while, and then vanquiſheth away?* And yet an eternity depends upon it; ſurely there the laying Death to Heart, is not practiſed till our affections are duly affected with our concernment in it; and that,

Ex hoc momento pendet Eternities.

Thirdly, And Principally by reſolving in ſincerity to make ready for it. The Heart by Sin, is become both deſultory in its Meditations and deceitful in its Reſolutions. I doubt not but this Day, there are many in the Chamber of utter Darkneſs, that in their way thither had their ſecret purpoſes to reform their Courſes, only for the preſent they had not leiſure. VVe forget that Sin like *Dalilah* hath cut our Locks, and ſo purpoſe in our own Strength,

Strength, and go out in the Srength of our Reſolutions, and thence all our purpoſes are ſnapt aſunder like *Sampſon*'s Withs, when outward temptations fall in with indwelling corruptions; but to reſolve in ſincerity, is with full purpoſe of heart, depending upon the Lord and the power of his might, to prepare to meet this formidable Enemy, and that with reſpect unto,

1ſt, Our Spiritual State; 2dly, With reſpect unto our preſent frame, the former is our ſafety, and the latter our comfort; every Believer dies ſafely, but he that is actually ready imbraces Death triumphantly and even before the Fight can ſing the Victory.

Firſt, Then to prepare with reſpect unto your ſtate, and this includes Three things.

1ſt. To be united unto Chriſt, and cloathed with his righteouſneſs. I know there are many witty expreſſions and fortifying conſiderations ſcattered in the Writings of Heathens to arm us againſt

Death's aſſults. But alas! All of them can't make an Armour of proof for a dying Man; the Sting of Death will pierce thro' all of them; nay bring in the righteouſneſs which thou haſt done, and that too will prove too ſcanty a Garment to cover thy ſhame. There is but one impregnable foretreſs, where this Enemy can never hurt you, and that is the Rock *Jeſus*: There is but one Robe that will effectually ſecure, as well as adorn thee, againſt this Enemy, and that is his Righteouſneſs: Death will find out every Man's ſtanding, whether it be in the firſt or ſecond *Adam*; if in the former, than all your Sins, are upon your Souls, and tho' now they ſeem light and ſit eaſy, yet every one of them will be heavier than a Milſtone to ſink thee into endleſs miſery; this the Apoſtle knew, when *he deſired to be found in him, not having his own righteouſneſs*, &c. *to be found in him*, Notes his Spiritual union with *Chriſt*; *not having mine own righteouſneſs*

Phil. 3. 9.

ouſneſs which is of the law. To ſignify the inſufficiency of all he could call his own, *But that which is thro' the faith of Chriſt.* Thereby owning that as he had no confidence in the fleſh, ſo his rejoycing was in *Chriſt Jeſus*, and his Righteouſneſs; its in him and with him only, that you can dwell in ſafety, and through him you muſt obtain the Victory.

2dly, When your covenant ſtate between God and you is ſecured: It was this that made the Pſalmiſt of *Iſrael* ſing ſo ſweetly when ſtepping into Eternity: He views his Family, and there finds nothing to ſupport his departing Spirit, but when he Reads over the Charter of the Covenant, he begins the Songs of *Zion*, tho' not yet paſt the ſwellings of *Jordan*: Here he ſaw that peace between God and him which would abide in Death, and out-live the Grave. They that are without the Bond of the Covenant, who have never given their Heart and Hand to be 2 *Sam.* 23. 5.

the Lord's, they may be dejected,
Pſ. 49. 5. and there is cauſe for it. But, *Why ſhould I fear in the day when the iniquities of my heels compaſs me about:* tho' not only Infirmities but many Iniquities lay ſeige againſt the believers Soul, yet why ſhould I be de-
verſ. 15. jected? *For the Lord will redeem my Soul from the power of the grave, my God will receive me.* What tho' Death ſeem never ſo terrible, it hath loſt its Sting; Chriſt by his Croſs hath turned thoſe Waters of *Marah* into a refreſhing Stream to all that are in Covenant with God thro' him: As in the firſt Covenant Death is the Meſſenger of Juſtice to drag the Sinner to execution, ſo in the New Covenant, it is the Meſſenger of a Father to fetch his Children to thoſe Manſions Chriſt hath prepared for them; tho' death is continued in its natural conception, as it is a diſſolving of our Frame and Union between Soul and Body, yet it is not continued in its moral notion, as a penal ſatisfaction: Death it ſelf is put into the Believers

lievers Inventory, *Death is yours.* 1 Cor. 3. 22.
Death is to every Man according to the Covenant in which it finds him; if there be a Covenant of Peace between God and Thee, then thou may'ſt go out boldly and meet death as a real Friend, tho' in the Array of a formidable Enemy.

3dly, When your Hearts are ſanctified and renewed, *We are ſaved by the Waſhing of Regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt.* Tit. 3. 5. Chriſt's Righteouſneſs will never be a defence to any but his own Image, If we take his Robe to cover us in our Sin, we do but deceive our own Souls: As death will wipe away all Tears from the Believer's Eyes, ſo it will take off the paint of Hypocritical Profeſſors; then elevated ſtrains ſhall not go for true Godlineſs, nor fair Words paſs for Charity, nor an empty Name for the power of Religion; he only ſhall appear an *Iſraelite* indeed that is without Guile, and hath true Grace or Wiſdom in the hidden parts. As Hypocrites, tho' they are embel-

liſh'd with many gliſtering Ornaments in the externals of Religion, yet they are always loathſom to God, becauſe of their unſeen uncleanneſſes; ſo tho' Believers have many viſible Infirmities and Imperfections, yet they are always glorious with the truth of Grace within, tho' like the Ark covered with coarſe Skins, yet pure Gold within; then do we truly lay death to heart, in preparing for it, when Sin in its dominion is caſt out of the heart, for he is a *Jew*, which is one Inward and Goſpel Circumciſion *is that of the heart, in the ſpirit.* where theſe three are ſecured that Soul's ſtate is ſafe.

Rom. 2. 29.

The ſecond preparation is to be actually ready for death: The former is and hath been the care of every true Believer, but the neglect of this latter makes the meſſage of death ſtrangely ſurprizing to many real Chriſtians; inſtead of going out of the World like the Patriarch, ſaying, *I have waited for thy Salvation*; or like old *Simeon*, *Now let-*

teſt

teſt thou thy Servant depart in peace, they cry out like him, *O ſpare me that I may recover ſtrength before I go hence and be no more*; tho' the Believer's Righteous Soul, while here, is vexed with the filthy Converſation of the Wicked, yet like *Lot* he is ready to linger, when God calls him out of this *Sodom* of a World. Would you then, die not only in ſafety, but with joy, inſtead of being dragg'd forcibly, go out willingly; and while others have their Souls taken from them, thou, like thy Redeemer, give up thine into the hand of thy heavenly Father; for this purpoſe be conſcientious in theſe four things. Luk. 2. 29. Pſal. 39. 13.

1. Let not the things of this World fix upon your Heart and Affections; it's difficult keeping the Heart chaſt for God when the Affections are intangled in the World; tho' your neceſſity will oblige you to drink of this *Jael's* Cup, yet beware of ſleeping in her Tent; beware of its Syrene Songs and Meretricious Smiles; tho' neither Earth

nor

nor Hell ſhall keep the Believer out of Heaven, yet they make many go halting thither. Maintain as much as poſſible the ſame opinion of your earthly enjoyments while living, as Men generally have [illegible] when dying. Look upon them rather as Talents committed to Servants, to improve for their Maſter's uſe, than as abſolutely your own, as they are free Gifts, which we never deſerved, ſo be thankful to the Donor; and as they are Talents ſo we ſhould be faithful, becauſe we muſt give an account to our Lord and Maſter. *So uſe this world as not to abuſe it, nor to have thy heart abuſed by it.* When thou ſeeſt the Kingdoms of this World and the Glory thereof, beware of falling down and worſhiping; let not the duſt of the Earth blind the eye of thy Faith, nor the pleaſures of it divide thy Love; whatever be the delight of your Eyes, be ſure that nothing but God in Chriſt be the delight of your Hearts.

1 Cor. 7. 31.

2. Keep

2dly. Keep your Loyns girt and your Lamps Burning. As we are to ſtand actually ready for whatſoever ſervice our Lord may appoint us, whether doing or ſuffering; ſo we muſt in order thereunto keep every Grace in exerciſe. It was very ſurpriſing, to the Wiſe Virgins, when the mid-night cry came to go out and meet the Bridgroom, to find their Lamps untrim'd, tho' there was Oyl in their Veſſels. As we are to live by the Faith of the Son of God for daily influence, ſo we are to walk by Faith, as the eye to direct our Practice. Let it be your care to ſay with the Spouſe. *At our gates are all manner of pleaſant fruits, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.* There you have plenty and variety. All manner of *&c*, and they are at the Gate, that is actually ready, and all for the Beloved. As all Grace is derived from *Chriſt*'s fulneſs, ſo it's devoted to him for his ſervice. Let there be Faith, to follow him in dark Providences, patience to wait for

*Gall.*2.20.

2 *Cor.* 5.7.

*Cant.*7.13.

him under delays, meekneſs to guard thy Spirit from being ruffled by the ſcurrilites of a ſordid World. Love which makes every duty eaſy, and this is the way to have an abundant entrance into thy Maſter's joy.

2 *Pet.* 1. 11.

3dly. Dye dayly unto Sin. It's Sin that will be the *Achan* and troubler of thy camp: This will make thee fly before this Enemy: This like *Jonah* will raiſe a Storm, if not caſt out. *Guilt*, that one word ſpoke by the Mouth of Conſcience, will be like a clap of Thunder in thy Boſom, it will make a dreadful convulſion in thy inner, when Death comes to attack thy outward Man, therefore keep thy Garments clean, and be often waſhing them in the Blood of the Lamb. Though thou art a Child of God, yet remember thou haſt that fuel ſtill in thee, that is very apt to catch the Devils Fire. Can a Traveller hold on his way rejoycing, with a Thorn in his Foot? No more can the believer with comfort march into Eternity with guilt lying upon his Conſcience.

ence. *Wherefore, beloved, ſeeing that ye look for ſuch things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without ſpot and blameleſs.* Walk circumſpectly, not as Fools, but as Wiſe, uncloathing your Souls as to the Old Man and his deeds, which are corrupt, and putting on the New Man in Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs; and this is the way with joy to meet thy God. 2 Pet. 3. 14. Eph. 4. 22. 24.

4thly, And laſtly be faithful to *Chriſt* in thy particular and proper ſtation: *Chriſt* is the great Maſter and appointer of every Man's Work and Poſt in the World. Be thou faithful unto the Death and then comes the Crown of Life. *John's* hearers were not ſollicitous about changing their imployments, but how they might ſerve God in them. How ſhall he that loyters with the ſluggard in his day for ſervice, in the Evening reſt from his Labours? Some Men are always buſie, but doing nothing in the great work of their Salvation. *Why ſtand you here all the day idle?* He that hath leaſt Rev. 2. 10. Matt. 20. 6.

hath one Talent, and if thou art not a wicked Servant, that will be improved for thy Lord. Does *Solomon* ſend the ſluggard to an inſect to be his Teacher? And may not many Chriſtians be ſent to the inanimate part of the Creation to learn to ſerve God in their particular relations? *The ſtars in their courſes fought for God againſt Siſera.* He is the moſt excellent Chriſtian, that Honours God in his particular relations, in which he hath placed him. In ſhort, true Grace is no Friend to Idleneſs. Parents and Children, Maſters and Servants, Magiſtrates and Miniſters, have their work appointed them, in the World; and its our Buſineſs to be diligent in it: Would you then ſtand actualy ready? Follow the example of your Lord, Redeemer, who when about to leave the World could ſay, *John* 17. 4. *I have finiſhed the work which thou gaveſt me to do.* Loſe not your preſent opportunities, but do the Work of him that ſent thee into this World, while it is day, that thou

thou mayeſt ſay with the Apoſtle. *I have finiſhed my courſe, I have fought the good fight of Faith.* I am now putting off my Sword, and have no more to do, but to receive the Crown. And Bleſſed is that Servant whom when his Lord comes he ſhall find thus ſtanding and thus doing: He hath no more to do, but to Die and enter into the joy of his Lord. 2 Tim. 4. 7.

The Second thing I propoſed was to ſhow, That to lay Death to Heart, when we ſee it removing the beſt of Men and Miniſters, is but highly reaſonable. The Living will, *de jure* he ought to do it, and if a Wiſe Man *de facto* he will lay it to Heart, as hath been ſhown. And that,

Firſt, Becauſe it's the end of all Men. No ſooner Man brought in Sin, but Death paſſed upon all Men. It's an innocent miſtake when in the Houſe of Mourning, where an end is come to another, to imagine it our own. It is but to antidate that which muſt certainly, and, it may be, ſhortly come. What if

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in the ſucceſſion of many Ages God hath made two and but two Men's time run into eternity without interruption. Can we tell what change paſt upon them in their
1 Cor. 15. 50. tranſlation? *For this I ſay that Fleſh, and Blood,* as now fram'd and faſhioned *can't inherit the Kingdom of God:* And thoſe that remain alive at our Lord's appearing, tho they ſhall not Die as it is a diſſolution of the frame of Man, or ſeparation of the Soul and Body, yet they ſhall be changed to
51, 52. a fitneſs or capacity for the Glory of that illuſtrious Day: Tho' the Life of Man admits of, many maybes and peradventures, yet his Dying admits of none. *It is appointed*
Heb. 9.27. *for all Men once to die. The rich and poor are there.* The Beggar Dyed and ſo did the Rich Man; all paſs through this Gate, tho' the ways immediately part upon it, like a Princes Palace that hath but one common Gate, at which Criminals and Children enter: The one goes up to his Fathers Manſions, the other down

down to his Dungeon. Thus it is with good and bad. The Roſe of *Sharon* and Lillie of the Valley, tho' they are more Pleaſant and Beautiful while Living, yet they are not leſs Mortal than the common Graſs. The ſweet Singer of *Iſrael* muſt come to his laſt words, and the moſt charming Preacher to his laſt Sermon. Among the many Rules and Directions written for the preſerving of Health, none was ever ſo mad as to pretend a Medicine that would turn away Death, for *it's the end of all Men.*

Secondly, The weighty but unſeen circumſtances that may attend our Dying: God hath as much appointed the limits of our Lives, as the bounds of our habitations: The whole of our Days make up but a few Years, and they are full of Evil. The time at longeſt is but ſhort: But there are two circumſtances which ſhould moſt of all affect us, one is we know not the critical moment when our Lord will come, whether, while weare young and

Luke 40. 12. tender, or whether he will ſtay till the Years come, in which we ſhall ſay we have no pleaſure. Another is the manner in which he will ſend for us; whether the thread of our Lives ſhall be ſnapt of a ſudden, or worn out by a lingering Conſumption? This Meſſenger Death will come, but can we tell where he will meet us, in the Street or in the Cloſet, on Bed or at Board? Can you tell in what Livery he will appear? Tho' Death be to the believer, the Meſſenger of a Father, yet thy Father may ſend for thee in a Chariot of Fire: May it not blow a Storm when thou art to launch out into the eternal ocean? Whereas a more gentle gale may waft another over. In a word, *all* *Pet.* 1. 24. *fleſh is graſs, and the glory thereof as the flower of the graſs, the graſs withereth,* &c. Can you tell what Hand God will uſe to cut it down? It may be the Hand of an Infant, the Teeth of an Inſect, or a blaſt of Wind; and if it ſtands long, of it ſelf, it's fading and withering:

Surely

Surely then it's but reaſonable to be affected with our Death before it come.

Thirdly, Becauſe it is not the end of your being, but your entering upon an unchangeable condition. You don't ceaſe to be, but ceaſe to be Mortal: Now you fall into Sin, and there is a may be of your Recovering; but then, *as the Tree falls ſo it lies*: Now many that are caught in the Snare of the Devil, may be Reſcued by their Redeemer; but if you fall a Captive to Satan in this Rancounter, there's no Ranſom for ever. There's no miſtaking twice in this Warfare, nor is there any room to correct an Error. *For there's no Work, nor Device, nor Wiſdom in the Grave, whither thou art going.* For you that are Believers, it's your going to meet your Head and Husband; and ſhall not the Lambs Wife make her ſelf ready: You are Wiſe Virgins, and is it not a reproach that the Wiſe ſhould ſleep with the Fooliſh; as this enters you upon a ſtate where there's no mixture, all pure Joy, or unmixt

Eccl. 9. 10.

Miſery, ſo it puts you beyond all changing; the Believer ſhall never more put to Sea, or be in a Storm again. And for you that are Unbelievers, there ſhall no more be a Meſſenger of Peace to knock at your Doors, that which is now your deſire ſhall be your Doom: Now you deſire the Almighty to depart from you, and he will leave you to all Eternity. O Sirs! this one Word Eternity, if duly Weighed by us, either as it reſpects Happineſs or Torments; we could not look upon the Death of others without laying it to Heart, by Preparing for our own. Thus I have done with my Doctrine, which I may rather call an Application: I am afraid the Age we Live in, needs more to be urged to Practice, than entertained with the Explication of what is more abſtruſe; many know much, and know that they do know, but few Practiſe what they know. What I have further to ſay, is to apply this Doctrine with reſpect unto the preſent occaſion; I might draw ſeveral Inferences from hence. As, *Firſt*,

First, That the Christian Religion does not forbid, but commend our sympathising with those that mourn for deceased Friends. Religion is not a rigid Sowerness; true Grace regulates, but does not destroy natural Affections: Tears came in by the first *Adam*, and they were Legitimated by the second, *Jesus wept:* If we are not only to go, to the House of mourning but to lay it to heart, sure I am we are to be affected with those that are afflicted in it.

Secondly, I might collect how difficult it is to make right Improvement, even of those things that are most obvious: We live among the Monuments of the Dead, and it's of the Lord's Mercy, that we are spared. The Living *know they must die.* Some have the Harbingers of this King of Terrours, already come, and feel Death already invading them: The Records of the Grave, tell us, it's the House of all Living, and yet how difficult is it to be affected with it. Some possibly will say, they have been hearing a very

common Theme this Morning, but canſt thou ſay by all the Funerals thou haſt frequented or Sermons, thou haſt heard, that thou haſt laid thy Death to Heart, by making ready both as to thy ſtate and frame, as hath now been ſhown?

Thirdly, How irrationally do they act, who inſtead of laying Death to Heart, put it far from them, and lay Sin next their Heart, and in their Affection: They hug the *Serpent* that will Sting them, the Worm that will gnaw in their Boſoms to all eternity: God hath not given them the ſeeing Eye, nor the underſtanding Heart unto this Day. Some there are that carry it towards Death, as if they were able to Hector it to ſtay their leaſure, or elſe were reſolved [as one ſays] to try what Muſick there is in Weeping and Wailing joyned in conſort with Gnaſhing of Teeth: Such may truly be ſaid to be Dead while Living, *for the living* &c

Second Uſe by way of Exhortation.

Shall not we that are Living lay this

this to Heart, that Death hath bereft us of one that uſed to be a Meſſenger of Peace from God to us in this Place: One did I ſay? I might have ſaid many: Or muſt I take up the Prophets complaint. *The righteous periſh, and no man layeth it to heart.* Poſſibly you'll ask, when ſuch an one Died? What was his Diſtemper? Who ſucceeds him? And in what condition is his Family left? And when this is done, your concern is over and gone. Is this to lay what is come to paſs to Heart? No! this doès evidence, that there was little Love to them while Living; when we can ſo eaſily forget them when Dead. Is the *Staff* and the *Stay*, the *Ancient* and the *Prophet* taken away, and will the Living not be affected.

Is. 57. 1. Nemo Homo ponit in animo Junius.

I know Funeral Sermons have been much abuſed by daubing flattery, whence ſome have condemn'd them in groſs, and think their ought to be no more notice taken of the precious than of the vile: I grant that my work is not to praiſe the Dead, but

to

to inſtruct the Living; and if I ſhould attempt a panigyrick in this caſe, it would be, to put Paint upon pure Gold: However, oppreſſed Innocence ought to be vindicated, and ſhameleſs Sinners ought to be reproved, whether they will, or will not regard it. I ſhall therefore mention Three, things which if well conſidered, will ſhow what juſt reaſon there is to be deeply affected.

1ſt. The Perſon.
2dly. The Seaſon.
3dly. The hand the Living had in it.

Firſt, For the Perſon, not that I pretend to tell you his worth, for that would ſuppoſe I knew all he was. Only give me leave to ſpeak of him under a double capacity. 1ſt. As a gracious Man. 2dly. As a Miniſter of *Jeſus Chriſt*.

Firſt, As a gracious Man. True Grace is the laſting Foundation of Honour and Greatneſs. Let Hell and Earth unite their Malice to contradict it

it, the Oracles of Heaven will maintain it, That *the righteous ſhall be in everlaſting remembrance.* In him, Heaven gave an early confutation of that opprobrious, but too common reflection, That Miniſters Children, of all others, ſeldom mind Religion: He could ſay, and that truly too, as *Obadiah* did, *Thy ſervant feared the Lord from my youth.* He was early Planted in the Beams of the Sun of Righteouſneſs; and thereby quickly ripened to do his Maſter eminent Service: He not only from a Child knew the Scriptures, but through them was *made wiſe unto Salvation.* Nor was his goodneſs like the Morning Cloud and the early Dew, but like *the ſhining light which ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day.* Tho' through conſtant labour in his Maſters Vineyard, and other afflictive providences, he contracted an early weakneſs in his outward Man; ſo that his *Strength was weakned in the way.* Yet it was evident, that by the influence of his Living Head, his in-

Pſ. 112.6. 1 *Kings* 18. 12. 2 *Tim.* 3. 15. *Prov.* 4. 18.

ner Man grew Day by Day. Were I to tell you the various Trials with which he was exercised, and his carriage in them, you would then say in him patience had its perfect Work: And had I time and you patience to speak of the several graces which flourished in him, in the various Relations and Capacities, in which his Lord plac'd him. It would appear beyond contradiction, that Grace shin'd, with that Divine and Spiritual Glory, in the course of his Conversation; that if the Malice of any should infatuate them to deny it: None who truly knew him, will ever believe them: And as he Lived by the Faith of the Son of God, so he Died like him. (Far from an implacable Spirit) not without having begg'd that God would pardon and bless, even them, that had acted a cruel Tragedy towards him.

Secondly, Consider him *as a Minister*; his Soul was better taught, than to think the Ministry, a Work to be undertaken without, or with a meer superficial Tincture of Learning; and

and therefore, while he lifted up his Voice for *Underſtanding*, he alſo ſought & ſearcht in all the ordinary Ways for attaining *Wiſdom*, & thro' *Prov.* 2. the happy Conjunction of a *Penetra-* 3, 4. *ting Mind*, *an Active Phancy*, and a *Tenacious Memory*, with the Bleſſing of Heaven upon his *great Induſtry*, his profiting ſoon appear'd to the great Judges of Learning then living, inſomuch, that before he was 22 Years of Age (as far as I can learn) he was fixed in the paſtoral Relation at *Amſterdam*. And this I the rather mention, becauſe there are ſome that think no Young Men is to be call'd into that Relation. I readily grant, the Apoſtles *Novice* is to be ſhunn'd for the *1 Tim.* 3. 6 Reaſon there mention'd; but our Apoſtle does not uſe the Word νέον a Young Man, but νεόφυτον a Man young in Religion; or newly planted into Chriſt and his Communion, an old Man with gray Hairs upon him, if but newly planted in Grace is the Apoſtles Novice; ſuch as are not rooted in Chriſt Jeſus, and leſs in Learning, may fall under the A-

poſtles Doom, but where God hath begun by times to lay in and ſtore with Grace and Learning; what is his Deſign but to have a quick Return, when he finds Employment for them, and ſuch an one was our truly old, when in Nature a young Man. Tho' his Miniſterial Labours were great, in which he never ſerved God with that which coſt him naught; and but rarely any Aſſiſtance enjoyed: Yet his Active Soul was ſo deeply inlaid with the Love of Learning, that without much Danger of an Hyperbole, I might apply to him what was ſaid of *Longinus*, he became a Living Library. If any would Query what was his Learning? I might anſwer in the ſeveral parts of it, both as to Words and Things; but that which was his Delight and his Honour, was to be intimately acquainted with the Myſtery of *God-man* his Redeemer; his Thoughts run much upon the Corner Stone, and only Foundation of our Religion; and tho' his Strength was much impared before he

Bibliothecam Vivam & Ambulans Muſeum. Conigii *Biblioth.*

he appeared in this City, yet there was ſo much left as to give abundant Evidence of the Greatneſs of Thought and Spring of Learning, that lodg'd within; while his Thoughts travell'd moſt in the higher Rounds of the Chriſtian Religion: He gave alſo abundant Evidence of his Accuracy in diſtinguiſhing and applying ſuch practical Points *as accompany Salvation.* This Light burnt clear, but faſt; and tho' his afflicted Friends and Relations were ready ſometimes to conceive Hopes of his emerging from his Weakneſſes, yet the Clouds gathered after Rain, and the Storms ſoon return'd again; but tho' the Winds blew, and the Storms beat upon his battered Bark, yet in Patience he poſſeſt his Soul, his Faith was firm without wavering, that Jeſus which he had laid for many to build upon, was his Stay: In this Rock he ſtood, and with undaunted Courage, encountr'd this laſt Enemy, truſting in the Lord. This is the Chriſtian, this is the Miniſter, that is dead. Dead

Heb. 6. 9. His laſt Sermons at Pinners-Hall.

did I say; I must recal that Word,
μετῳκισεν and say (his Aged Father yet living)
Acts. 7. 4. God hath removed him from this *Ur*, to be, not a Sojourner, but an everlasting Inhabitant in the Heavenly *Canaan*, where he shall shine as the Stars for ever and ever, having been made wise in turning many unto Righteousness.
Dan. 12. 3.

Secondly, Consider *the Season of it*. That which cut the Patriach *Jacob* to the Heart, was, that when *Simeon* was not, and *Joseph* was not, to hear that *Benjamin* must be taken from him too. We might, according to the Course of Nature, have expected our Brothers abode with us, for many Years: But lo! An Evening is come, when but a little past the Meridian of Man, and this come upon us while our Wounds were bleeding: The other day we were lamenting the Loss of one that had laboured long, and with great Success in his Lords Vineyard: *The*
Gen. 49. 24. *Arms of his Hands were made strong, by the Hands of the Mighty God of Jacob*; One, who for great Grace, solid

solid and well digested Learning, for Might and Majesty in weilding the Sword of the Spirit, *was an Interpreter one of a Thousand.* His extensive Affection and Charity, maintain'd in him a constant Tenderness toward even those that differ'd from him, tho' he sorely suffered for maintaining a Conscientious dissent from them, in Discipline and Government. And is he no sooner gone, but an other must follow him? As if Heaven designed a Succession of Losses, till we have no more to loose. To take a Tile from a House is soon repaired, but to take away the Buttresses from a leaning Wall, or the Pillars on which the House appears to lean, is as if the Owner designed the Building to sink into Ruines; the Loss of an immortal Soul, the Loss of the everlasting Gospel, and the Loss of a faithful godly Minister, are the greatest Losses that can befall us. And if we are truely affected with the Loss of the two former, we can but lay to heart the Death of the latter, so that while we ought to rejoyce, *quod talem habui-* *Job.* 33. 23.

huimus, that we had such a one, we ought to be concerned that now he is taken from us, and that when so many were so lately gone before him.

Thirdly, *The Hand the living had in it:* *When Gods Judgements are on the Earth, the Inhabitants of the World will learn Righteousness*; its but reasonable to expect, when such things are done by the hand of God, that we put the Question, am I the Person that hath provoked Heaven to remove from Earth, such a Blessing? I readily own, that Ministers are but Men, tho' their Graces be great, yet they are but in their Minority, and the greatest *Men are not always Wise*; I allow also, that God never does any thing toward his Children in a way of harsh Providence, but he sees cause enough in them for his procedure in such a way with them: God tells *Moses*, that he should not pass over *Jordan*, into the Earthly *Canaan*, because of his own Transgression; and yet *Moses*, by the Spirit of God, lays it at the Peoples Door, as the Cause why it

Isa. 26. 9.

Job 32. 9.

Compare Deut. 32, 51. *with* 1. 37. *and* 4. 21.

it went thus ill with him. Tho' every Mans time is appointed, and the Inſtruments by which his Death is brought about, are under the Orders of a wiſe Providence, yet the Inſtruments are not the leſs guilty, that have been voluntary Agents: *Offences muſt come, but woe to them by whom they come*; Chriſt's Death was in every part of it, according to the Counſel of God; yet the Inſtruments and their Children to this day, lie under his anger for it; I muſt ſpeak it on the behalf of him whoſe Death gave me this ſad Occaſion: Was he not wounded in the Houſe of his profeſſed Friends; or did he not ſuffer more by divided Friends (as they pretended to be) than united Enemies? They that are guilty will poſſibly ſay like the whoriſh Woman, who, *when ſhe hath eaten, wipeth her Mouth, and ſays, I have done no Wickedneſs.* There is a levelling Spirit yet in our World, and that among ſome who bear their Heads high above others for Reli-

Prov. 30. 20.

Religion; my meaning is, that thoſe who never had any Reputation of their own, are prodigal in murdering and waſting the Reputation of other Men, that none may ſeem better or above themſelves. That which the Apoſtle foretold, ſeems to be now fulfilled, a ſpreading Leproſie of vile Sins prevailing; and that which makes it both more odious and dangerous, is, they cover it under a Form of Godlineſs; they intitle Heaven to the Eruptions of Hell, and lay their own Brats at God's Door. If any ſhould ask me, what have they done in this Matter? I ſhall only return that Anſwer which *Plato* did, when *Dioniſius* the Tyrant wrote to him, deſiring he would not report his evil Practices; to whom *Plato* made this Return, *He had not ſo much Leiſure as to think or ſpeak of him*— Meaning, he had better things to employ his thoughts and time about, than to relate the noted Barbarities and unparaleil'd Cruelties of a Per-

2 *Tim.* 3. 3, 4, 5.

Diog. Laert. *in vit.* Plat. *non ſibi tantum ſuper eſſe otii*, &c.

Perſon, who was ſo very notorious that their needed no Hiſtorian to inform the World of him, or them. But when I have ſaid this, I muſt be juſt to many of them, where for a time he ſtood in a paſtoral Relation. Such there were who truly Lov'd him, and now lament the loſs of him; they were reall Mourners for, tho' they could not be healers of their breaches, of whom I dare not doubt, but their Achans being gone and the troublers of their *Iſrael* departed, they will remain a peacable Habitation, and may yet revive and flouriſh under the Bleſſing of Heaven, upon this I would leave theſe two or three cautious.

Firſt, Let not this prejudice any at Church order. Will any Wiſe Man ſpeak againſt Liberty, becauſe ſome by it, grow licentious? Or will any affect an abſolute Tyranny to live in a ſlaviſh Subjection, becauſe a well conſtituted Government is now and then afflicted with a popular commotion? It were eaſy to make it appear both from Scripture and Hiſtory, that the beſt conſtituted Churches have not been exempted from ſuch diſturbances. Weeds will ſpring up in the moſt regular Gardens, Vermin will crawl amongſt the ſweeteſt Roſes. Think not worſe of Churches, becauſe now and then in them there appears a *Diotrephes*, to diſturb their peace, and cauſe diviſions.

2dly. Let Church Members, beware how they begin contention, beware of drawing at

either end of that Saw, a little ſpark may not only burn down your own, but your Neighbours dwelling. It's eaſy giving vent to Paſſion, but its like the breaking out of Water not eaſily reclam'd again, and an *offended brother is harder, to won than a ſtrong Tower.* Prov. 18.19.

3dly, Let Churches be prudent and careful whom they admit to their Fellowſhip. Its eaſier letting in, than it is to caſt out. Thus I have finiſhed the firſt Exhortation to lay this our loſs to heart, from the conſideration of the *Perſon*, the *Seaſon*, and *the hand the living had in it.*

The ſecond Exhortation I would a little proſecute is, to thoſe, who are ſetting their Heart and Hand to Chriſt's Plow. Thoſe who are ingaged at leaſt in their ſtudies and purpoſes for the Miniſtry, or but entered upon it, I hope they will not think me too aſſuming in what I ſay to them; nor would I have others think I flatter, becauſe I am not aſhamed to ſay I ſincerely Love them. Your work is great, and difficulties many; yet in the very work, there is a reward. The meaneſt Station about a King is Honourable. What is it then to ſtand next the King of Kings? I know ſeveral, I wiſh I knew more, of whom I dare not doubt, but that they are Plants of God's own Planting, and under his Bleſſing ſhall ſtand up in his Work and Service in the room of thoſe who now reſt from their Labours: To ſuch I would recommend theſe things. *Firſt,*

First, Labour to have your heart eſtabliſhed with Grace, as well as your Heads with knowledge; without the Oil of Grace, you will never make laſting Lights, burning and ſhining for the Reputation and Honour of your Lord and Maſter, and without Knowledge, you'll hand out Poyſon, in ſtead of ſpiritual Food; God complains of *ſome that handled the Law, they knew him not*; that is, God and they had no ſpiritual acquaintance, they were void of Grace. The Apoſtle ſpeaks of others *that were deſirous to be teachers of the law, underſtanding neither what they ſay, nor whereof they affirm.* Such ſeek what they can get, but not to be fit for what they undertake; it hath been obſerv'd, *That Heretick's are always fond of ignorant Upſtarts*; becauſe ſuch are moſt apt to be taken with Popular Applauſe; but when Head and Heart are thus qualified, then like a well-built and ballac'd Ship, you will be able to ſteer a ſteady Courſe thro all the Storms of this World.

Jer. 2. 8.

1 *Tim.* 1. 7.

Secondly, Joyn much Prayer and Meditation to your ſtudying. Study is to make you uſeful to others, but Prayer and Meditation brings it home to your own Souls: He that is the moſt earneſt Solicitor at the Throne of Grace, is like to be the moſt powerful Perſwader in delivering his Meſſage, ſtorm Heaven, If you would prevail with Men, get your own Heart warm'd with the Love of God in Private, and then you'll be earneſt with others in the Pulpit.

Thirdly, Let the Miniſtry be your Work, to which your Souls and Hearts are devoted; make it your work in preparing: He that does not prepare what to ſay, tempts God to come out of his ordinary Courſe to his aſſiſtance; he that depends upon his own Preparations, makes a God of his Gifts. Let it be your work in delivering; ſhew that your Buſineſs is rather to profit Souls than pleaſe the Ear; beware of an *affected Niceneſs* in expreſſion, and ſhun a ſordid rudeneſs, leaſt it cauſe a loathing

ing of ſpiritual Food. Let it be your work in Living, as well as Preaching; beware of pulling down with your hands, what you build with your mouths; in a word, if the Miniſtry be thy work thou'llt give thy ſelf to it, and thereby in a little time do much for God: And what if diſcourag'd by the World, ſeeing *your labour is not in vain in the Lord*, it will be more Honour and Glory in the Day of Chriſt, to have been an Inſtrument in bringing one Soul to Heaven, than if thou hadſt conquer'd a World, and brought it under thy power; and what if you ſeem *to labour in vain, and ſpend your ſtrength for nought*, when *your judgment is with the Lord, and your Reward with your God.* Iſa. 49. 4.

The *laſt Exhortation* is to you that are Hearers: Is God by Death removing your Uſeful Guides and Inſtructors from you? Lay this to Heart:

Firſt, *In being cautious to whom you commit the Care and Conduct of your Souls.* How ſhall they teach you the Myſteries of Salvation, who

themſelves are ignorant of them? Its an eaſie matter to run into the Miniſtry, but not ſo eaſie to be a *Miniſter*. What was *opprobriouſly* ſaid of old, may be here applied, *Many Servants run away now a days from their Maſters*, I wiſh there were no cauſe to ſay, many run from that which is their ſervice, into that they were never called nor ſent of God. There is an univerſal complaint, that the Spirit is much withdrawn, but if you view Mens running in this great Work of the Miniſtry without regard to the ordinary ways for attaining Qualifications for ſuch an undertaking; you muſt allow that either the Miniſtry is become a more eaſie buſineſs to diſcharge, than ever it was judg'd to be formerly, or that there is an Extraordinary Effuſion of the Spirit, by which Men of a ſuddain are qualified for it, or elſe we are under a dreadful Judgment.

1 Sa. 25. 10.

I am not ſuch a ſuperſtitious Adorer of Learning, as to leſſen or Exclude the Work of the Spirit, I know the Spirit can qualifie Perſons for

for his Work; but then, what others must seek in an ordinary way, that he does by his extraordinary power; and when extraordinary Operations are not to be expected, at least, are professedly own'd in the present posture of Affairs to be departed, we are to seek in the ordinary way to attain such Qualifications as are needful in that work; the neglecting of which is but a gratifying the Designs of those who are several ways assaulting our Religion: which are chiefly Two:

1. *Advancing Reason above and against Revelation:* As if, like the Moon, it never shin'd so brightly as when in opposition to the Sun; they appeal to this as the supream Judge for Faith and Practice; as if it were not our truest Reason, *to prefer the Mind and Word of an infinite Being, before our own finite understanding:* Much more intolerable is this Arrogance, when they have so debas'd and debauch'd their Rational Powers, that they are not able to judge in things of a Man, and yet will appeal

to them only, as the great and supream Decider of all Matters relating to God and the Christian Religion.

2. *By decrying a Standing Ministry in the Church of God:* Every one of the Lord's People are Prophets (Would to God the Spirit of the Prophets appear'd in all that profess and claim the Priviledge!) A Standing Ministry is a Humane Invention, and a piece of meer Superstition, and the Idol Learning is only to make ignorant People credit, and rashly receive what they impose upon them: As the former is manag'd among the Men of Letters, so the other is calculated for the People of a lower size. I grant, that great Clerks are not always Wise Men; that Christ's fiercest opposers have been found amongst those who have been Head and Shoulders taller than others in Natural Knowledge: But because some that have their Eyes, abuse them, shall I chuse a blind Man for my Guide. You may as soon expect to see a Man bred up at Plough or Cart, to steer a

Ship in a Storm, thrô Shelves and Rocks without daſhing, as ignorant Miniſters maintain the Preaching of the Goſpel, without falling into dangerous, if not damnable Errors; therefore be very cautious to whom you commit the Conduct of your Souls.

Secondly, *Pray for your Miniſters.* It may be you don't profit under their Miniſtry, becauſe you deny them a ſhare in your Prayers; their Work is great, their Temptations many, and their Strength in themſelves ſmall; Never ſay you love 'em, while you are not concern'd to ingage God to ſucceed them; pray that God would give them the Tongue of the learned to ſpeak a Word in ſeaſon to thy condition, and that he would give thee *the hearing ear, and the underſtanding heart*, both which, are the gift of God. *Pro.* 20. 12

Thirdly, *Maintain Affection and Eſteem for your Miniſters.* Let them not have cauſe to complain, Theſe are the wounds I receiv'd in the Houſes of ſuch and ſuch Profeſſed Friends. I ask you not ſuperſtitiouſly to idolize Men or Miniſters, *yet let them be highly eſteemed for their works ſake*: Thô they are but earthen Veſſels, yet they are intruſted with the moſt precious Treaſure. What if their Perſons are no more, nay poſſibly leſs than other Men, yet their Office calls for Reſpect and Honour. They are Ambaſſadors of Chriſt, and by the Law of Nations Ambaſſadors are to have civil Uſage; beware of Prejudice, for he that is prejudic'd *1 The.* 5. 13.

to them only, as the great and ſupream Decider of all Matters relating to God and the Chriſtian Religion.

2. *By decrying a Standing Miniſtry in the Church of God:* Every one of the Lord's People are Prophets (Would to God the Spirit of the Prophets appear'd in all that profeſs and claim the Priviledge!) A Standing Miniſtry is a Humane Invention, and a piece of meer Superſtition, and the Idol Learning is only to make ignorant People credit, and raſhly receive what they impoſe upon them: As the former is manag'd among the Men of Letters, ſo the other is calculated for the People of a lower ſize. I grant, that great Clerks are not always Wiſe Men; that Chriſt's fierceſt oppoſers have been found amongſt thoſe who have been Head and Shoulders taller than others in Natural Knowledge: But becauſe ſome that have their Eyes, abuſe them, ſhall I chuſe a blind Man for my Guide. You may as ſoon expect to ſee a Man bred up at Plough or Cart, to ſteer a

Ship

Ship in a Storm, thrô Shelves and Rocks without dashing, as ignorant Ministers maintain the Preaching of the Gospel, without falling into dangerous, if not damnable Errors; therefore be very cautious to whom you commit the Conduct of your Souls.

Secondly, *Pray for your Ministers.* It may be you don't profit under their Ministry, because you deny them a share in your Prayers; their Work is great, their Temptations many, and their Strength in themselves small; Never say you love 'em, while you are not concern'd to ingage God to succeed them; pray that God would give them the Tongue of the learned to speak a Word in season to thy condition, and that he would give thee *the hearing ear, and the understanding heart*, both which, are the gift of God. *Pro.*20.12

Thirdly, *Maintain Affection and Esteem for your Ministers.* Let them not have cause to complain, These are the wounds I receiv'd in the Houses of such and such Professed Friends. I ask you not superstitiously to idolize Men or Ministers, *yet let them be highly esteemed for their works sake*: Thô they are but earthen Vessels, yet they are intrusted with the most precious Treasure. What if their Persons are no more, nay possibly less than other Men, yet their Office calls for Respect and Honour. They are Ambassadors of Christ, and by the Law of Nations Ambassadors are to have civil Usage; beware of Prejudice, for he that is prejudic'd *1 The.*5.13.

dict'd against the Person, will not, without a Miracle, be edified by his preaching; if *Ahab* hate *Micaiah*, he will be inraged rather than instructed by his admonition and warning; therefore maintain Affection and Esteem for them.

Fourthly, *Lay to heart what you are frequently hearing from your Ministers while living*: let not their Doctrine, which drops like the Rain, be only like a Shower upon a Rock, where no Impression is made, or a Tale that is told; but like *Mary*, lay up what thou heareſt in thy heart, that when thy Miniſter is remov'd thou mayſt be able to recollect and ruminate upon what was formerly deliver'd by him for thy Soul's Edification: Oh beware of looſing your Seaſons of Grace: it may be, there are ſome here this Morning, that may never hear another Sermon, and will it not be a cutting conſideration, to think that of all you have heard of dying, you were never affected with it, nor mov'd to prepare for Death by it. We have loſt many Eminent Miniſters, and is all loſt you have heard from them? Let not your Souls be like broken Ciſterns, that let out the pure water, and keep nothing but the Mud and Corruption of this world. Labour to make them the Store-houſe of Divine Truths, *giving moſt earneſt heed, leſt at any time you ſhould let them run out*. And this is the true means to keep your Soul, both waking and working, which is the right way of watching and waiting for the *coming of our Lord*.

Heb. 2. 1.

FINIS.